

Appleton, J.

AN

ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY

FOR

SUPPRESSING INTemperance,

AT THEIR ANNIVERSARY MEETING,

MAY 31, 1816.



BY JESSE APPLETON, D. D.

PRESIDENT OF BOWDOIN COLLEGE.



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*At the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Society
for the Suppression of Intemperance, June 1, 1816—
Voted, that Rev Mr. LOWELL, Rev. Dr. McKEAN, and
Rev. Mr. RIPLER, Sen. be a Committee to present the
thanks of the Society to the Rev. Dr. APPLETON, for his
appropriate and excellent Address, delivered before them
this day, and to request a copy of it for the press.*

J. HUNTINGTON, Rec. Sec. pro tem.

ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the Massachusetts Society for suppressing Intemperance,

STRONGLY impressed with the conviction, that a deep interest ought to be excited on the present occasion, I rise under the disheartening consciousness of being able to say nothing, which has not been already presented to your reflections.

On the subject of intemperance, obvious facts first excited alarm ; alarm produced enquiry ; and enquiry served but to increase the alarm. These facts, together with calculations founded upon them, have been, in various ways, laid before the public, that the excitement, so justly produced, might not only be maintained, but lead to such counsels and systematical efforts, as the occasion demands. All mention of these facts, notwithstanding their present notoriety, I know not how to avoid. Like the great disclosures made by revelation, they *must* be perpetually displayed, as motives to action and perseverance. They are among the reasons, which led to the establishment of this society. They are of such a kind, as to justify us in what we have done ; and to condemn

us, I fear, for what we have neglected. Facts are of a nature, imperishable and immutable ; they can neither be annihilated nor changed. Whatever inferences fairly result from them, may, under the like circumstances, be a thousand times drawn, and will forever be entitled to the same regard.

The extent, to which intemperance prevails in our country, can scarcely now be considered a subject of conjecture ; it having been ascertained, with sufficient exactness, from well authenticated documents. From such documents it has been made to appear, that, unless a reformation has been effected within a few years, by coalitions for the suppression of vice, or by the circumstances of the nation, the yearly expenditure for ardent spirits in our country, will, at a moderate estimate, amount to *thirty-three millions of dollars*. Should it be granted that *eight millions* of this sum are necessarily expended, there will still be a yearly waste of *twenty-five millions*. The resources of that nation must, indeed, be ample, in whose finances so enormous a loss would not be sensibly felt. Regarding the subject then merely in relation to political economy, the suppression of intemperance imperiously claims the attention of the statesman and patriot.

But this diminution of wealth, vast as it really is, may be regarded, perhaps, as among the most moderate even of the political evils, resulting from the vice, whose suppression we are attempting. If we estimate this enormous sum merely as a loss, our calculation will be materially incorrect. That mass of ardent spirits, for which it is paid, becomes a subtle and powerful agent in relaxing the morals,

and prostrating the physical strength of its consumers; in which number are many, from whom the country might expect useful labours in peace, and honourable services in war.

Again, it must be considered, that the strength of a nation does not consist merely in sinews, bones, and muscles. The same quantity of physical power, will be more or less efficient in proportion to the confidence, union, and wisdom, with which it is exerted. A small number, well united, will accomplish more, than a much greater number under the influence of mutual jealousy. But union and confidence can be supported on no other foundation, than that of moral principle. This is the potent ligature, by which the various parts are reduced to the most advantageous and beautiful order, and preserved in their respective places. Now, as intemperance is the voluntary subjugation of reason to appetite, it deadens moral sensibility, and obliterates all distinction between virtue and vice.

Three ways have now been specified, in which, as a nation, we are enfeebled by an intemperate use of ardent spirits; *first*, in the term of four years, it produces a waste of property, to the amount of *a hundred millions*; *secondly*, powers, whether bodily or intellectual, are enfeebled by it to such a degree, as to be rendered incapable of those services and efforts, which might otherwise be calculated upon with confidence; *thirdly*, by corrupting the publick morals, it relaxes or dissolves the only bond, which can retain, in one compact, well organized mass, the discordant materials, of which society is composed. The last is, probably a

greater evil, even in a political point of view, than either of the preceding.

Hitherto we have not contemplated the effect, which intemperance has in shortening human life. On this subject, it is, indeed, impossible to make any *accurate* calculation. But, if we consider that variety of ways, in which it occasions death, the whole number of victims will appear great. Need I mention, that broils and affrays, resulting from inebriation, often result either in mortal wounds or immediate death;—that many, who suffer capital punishment under the hands of public justice, committed their crimes, when liquor had subdued their reason, and inflamed their passions? Need I attempt to enumerate all that variety of fatal casualties, from which persons in this condition are never secure? They may be consumed by the fire, plunged in the water, stiffened by the cold, trampled on by their own domestic animals, which they are no longer able to command, or crushed by the carriage of the unobserving passenger.

In all these instances, the attack, made by death, is furious; and the conquest is soon gained. Others he subdues by regular, gradual advances. By these, liquor is first taken incautiously, next intemperately;—the habit is fastened upon them; the whole system is disordered and debilitated; the mental powers decay somewhat more rapidly, than those of the body; and, therefore, the animal, neither human nor wholly brutal, may, for a short time, survive the man.

Among those who die thus sinfully and dishonourably, may be found, as has been already suggested, many, on whom their friends and society

in general had high claims ;—men, who once had it in their power to serve their families and their country, and, perhaps, for a time, yielded such service, not only by bodily strength and activity, but by intellectual powers of no ordinary worth. In this number are found not only some of the lowest forms, that human nature ever assumes, but merchants, scholars, physicians, counsellors, statesmen ; and, it is painful to add, some, who once presented the oblations of christian assemblies before the Eternal.

When we consider how various are the ways, in which intemperance shortens human life, and reflect on the enormous consumption of ardent spirits in our country, we shall hardly consider that computation as immoderate, by which the yearly victims of this vice are estimated at *six thousand*. In addition to this, it has been often observed, that many of the deaths, which, in bills of mortality, are attributed to other causes, were indirectly the result of intemperance ; as hereby the animal system was predisposed to be acted upon by ordinary maladies. By the intervention of these, the patient is saved from the discredit of dying in consequence of habitual inebriation. The remark, which the Psalmist makes in regard to transgressors in general, has, therefore, peculiar emphasis, when applied to the drunkard ; *Evil doers shall be cut off. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be ; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. He shall fly away as a dream ; yea, he shall be chased away, as a vision of the night.*

Let us next consider the difficulty of reclaiming those, who have already formed habits of intemperate drinking.

We were, indeed, shown, at our last anniversary,* by the exhibition of some very interesting facts, that reformation is not impossible. I rejoice, that this point is capable of being so satisfactorily established. I am grateful to any person, who collects and communicates remarks on such a subject.

We are hereby taught, that intemperance and reprobation are not precisely the same, and that he, who is guilty of the one, is not quite as certain of perdition, as he, who has already been sentenced to the other. Even this should prevent absolute despondency. Even this should induce the benevolent, assiduously and perseveringly, to use, for reclaiming the intemperate, every means, which may be suggested by religion, science, or worldly prudence.

But, while we are gratified at being assured, that the condition of the intemperate man is not perfectly desperate, it is impossible not to be struck with the paucity of those facts, which show it to be otherwise. Much enquiry, joined to critical observation, will indeed, furnish us with a few instances, in which reason has resumed her empire over debauched appetite. But it requires no strong powers of recollection, no ingenious investigation, to find facts of an opposite description. Unsought, they present themselves to the mind in frightful abundance.

The difficulty of subduing a propensity to immoderate drinking, is known by painful experience to many persons, in capacity of parent, brother, or friend. Parents may view, with more indulgence than alarm, occasional irregularities in a favourite

* See the Address then delivered by Rev. Abiel Abbot of Beverly.

son. By a repetition of these, some uneasiness is produced in spite of parental partiality. They begin with suggesting cautions, rise to mild remonstrance, and, as the case becomes more urgent, they make warm and reiterated appeals to his regard to interest, his love of character, his affection for them, his sense of moral obligation, and the well known effect of irregular habits in shortening human life. They flatter themselves, that all these efforts are not abortive. Some tender emotions, some ingenuous relentings are perceived. These are gladly hailed, as the witnesses of penitence, and the harbingers of reformation. Hopes thus suddenly formed, are found to be premature. The anxiety of the parents is renewed and augmented by recent evidence of profligacy in the son. To reclaim him, their affection prompts them to make new exertions,—to repeat arguments, which have hitherto been found ineffectual,—to exhibit these in new and various connexions. From remonstrance they proceed to entreaty, to supplication, and tears. The old bow before the young; the innocent pray to the guilty.

As a last expedient, they will change his place of residence. New scenes and new companions may be more propitious to virtue; at least they will exhibit fewer temptations to vice. The experiment is made, and with apparent success. His mind is so occupied with new associations, as, for a time, to yield little attention to the cravings of appetite. His friends again indulge a trembling hope, that, notwithstanding past irregularities, all may yet be well. Delightful, but vain illusion! The novelty gradually disappears; but the strength of inclina-

tion is unsubdued. The taste, which has been so unhappily formed, is now incorporated into his constitution,—it has become a permanent part of his character; it is always ready to be acted upon, when circumstances are presented, favourable to its indulgence. He becomes callous to shame, and deaf to remonstrance. Or, if there are some remains of moral sensibility, to avoid the stings of solitary reflection, he seeks relief in the excitement produced by dissipation. That, which he denominates pleasure, is nothing but a tumultuous agitation of the passions. As if visited by the curse of *Kahama*, “There is a fire in his heart, and fire in his brain.”

I once knew a young man of reputable connexions, and of more than ordinary powers of mind, who, conscious that he was verging towards intemperance, commenced his professional studies in a place, where rural scenes, and the prevailing state of morals, seemed well calculated to cherish sobriety, and repress vice. He profited by his situation, and imagined, that his good resolutions were gaining strength. At one disastrous hour, being visited by some of his former associates, he consented to renew, for once, the scenes of their former conviviality. Excessive indulgence was the result. The hours of returning sobriety were spent in self reproach. He justly considered his recent defection as a fatal crisis in his probation. Having no longer any confidence in himself, and thinking it useless to contend, he yielded to inclination, and became its unresisting captive.

Of the sufferings, endured by the parent of an intemperate son, that cruel suspense, already sug-

gested, is not the least. His expectations, which, to-day, are gathering strength, will be dead to-morrow. With tormenting rapidity, he passes from hope to fear, and from fear to hope. Nor, because it will be unavailing, can he divest himself of all anxiety. Natural affection prevents it. He is, therefore, chained to a load, which is always ready to recoil upon him.

In the case, which has been supposed, the disease was not suffered to become inveterate, before remedies were applied. Proportionably greater will be the difficulty of recovery, should the disorder be confirmed by long indulgence. To reclaim the inveterate drunkard, reason acknowledges the inadequacy of her powers. The object of reasoning is to produce conviction. But the sinner in question is convinced already. With intentions, the purity of which he cannot call in question, you remind him of his estate, already embarrassed and partially squandered; of his family, either corrupted, or impoverished, degraded, mortified, and comfortless;—of his limbs, become feeble and tremulous;—of his countenance, inflamed, disfigured, and rendered at once the hideous image of sin and death; and of many, whom habits, similar to his own, have brought prematurely to the grave; remind him, that, in the death of these, he has a sure and direful presage of his own. In aid of all these motives, appeal to his faith in revelation; point out to him that terrific sentence, which declares, that *no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God*—What have you gained by all this array of motives? He acknowledges, that your arguments are conclusive, and that your remonstrances are rational and

weighty. He weeps under the mingled influence of terrour and self reproach. Without being able to hide from his eyes the precipice before him, he advances towards it with tottering, but accelerated steps. The grave, ever insatiable, is prepared for him. It shrouds him from every eye, but that of his Maker.

No one will imagine, it is hoped, that my object, in thus presenting the difficulty of reclaiming men from habitual inebriation, is to discourage the attempt. The possibility of such a reformation has been proved, and is, therefore, undeniable. But to the successful issue of an arduous enterprise, it is necessary, that its nature should be fully known. The efforts employed may thus correspond with the resistance to be overcome. As Christians, but especially as members of this society, we are bound to use all lawful measures for weakening and subduing those habits of intemperance, which are already formed. Judicious exertions of this kind, if long continued, can hardly fail of producing some salutary effect. But to cherish virtue is easier, than to subdue vice. We may do much more in preventing bad habits, than in restoring good ones. Our object is rather to operate on the sound parts of society, than on those, which are sickly and decaying. And the difficulty—the almost insuperable difficulty of reforming men habitually intemperate, is surely the best reason on earth, why we should, if possible, prevent them from becoming so.

To give particular directions on this subject, will not be attempted. Some general remarks may not, perhaps, be thought foreign to the occasion.

Any peculiar fondness for inebriating liquor, or for the society of those, who use it freely, especially when exhibited by the young, ought to create alarm. Smaller aberrations from the rules of rigid temperance are viewed by some parents, as excusable on the score of youth ;—by others, as indications of spirit and sensibility. Extravagant severity may, doubtless, produce the same unhappy result, as the opposite extreme, and, therefore, ought not to be commended. But parental indulgence is never more obviously misplaced, than in the cases now supposed. The parent may be perfectly right, in attributing that moderate delinquency, which he has observed in his son, to youth, or to an excess of social feelings. In estimating the *moral quality* of the action, these circumstances are entitled to consideration. But, viewed in *respect to a future habit*, they should do nothing toward allaying parental fears. The same cause, which has produced intemperance once, may do it again. It is the constitution of our nature, that an action should be repeated with greater facility and less reluctance, than it was first performed ; and that this facility, or diminished reluctance should be proportionate to the frequency of the repetition. But intemperance is not changed either as to its nature or effects, because it may have originated in youth, or have been induced by excess in some of the better passions. If a young man possesses generosity, frankness, and social feelings, the greater pity, that these should contribute even indirectly to his present dishonour, and his final perdition.

Our estimate of habits and actions is, in no small degree, dependent on the manner, in which they

are mentioned by persons, in whose judgment and character we place confidence. There are those, whose opinions on human conduct are forming under our influence. The remark is emphatical in regard to our children and immediate connexions. But it can be said of few men, and surely not of those, who compose this society, that the effect of their opinions and conversation is confined to their own families. Instances of intoxication or intemperate drinking should not be mentioned with levity, or in such a manner, as to indicate little or no disapprobation of the crime. It is related by *Tacitus*, in praise of the ancient Germans, that, among them, it was never customary to treat vice with raillery.*

If satire can ever be advantageously employed for the suppression of vice, it must exhibit the solemn indignation of *Juvenal*, and not the relaxing urbanity of *Horace*. It must never leave us in doubt, whether to smile at the sinner, or participate his crimes. Nothing can render it consistent for us to act, as members of this society, but a conviction, that intemperance is a heinous offence, both against the public and against God. Our manner of speaking, and all our united exertions on this subject, should correspond with such a conviction.

But, of all the ways, in which the great object of our society may be promoted, none is so certainly and extensively effectual, as the propagation of moral sentiments and feelings. To expect the extermination of particular vices, where there is no firm, rational, and impressive belief in a divine

* *Nemo illic vitia ridet.* Tac. de Mor. Germ.

moral government and a just retribution, is to anticipate a rich harvest from fields not enclosed. Annoying animals, if expelled to day, will return to-morrow. If the growth is secured from one species, it may be devoured by another. The summer passes in fruitless labour, and the autumn witnesses disappointed hopes. Deep rooted moral principle is to the character, what pales and hedges are to cultivated grounds. It stands a faithful guardian both by night and day, and is equally effectual against every intruder. Men, whose general deportment indicates a yielding morality, are under great disadvantage for suppressing particular vices. If we are chargeable with indifference to virtue, or to those measures and efforts, which tend to advance it, we demolish the most substantial barrier not only against intemperance, but against vices still more enormous. Every person, on the other hand, contributes indirectly, but with certain effect, to the great object, for which we have associated, who cultivates personal sobriety and the principles of religion, and who honours "those institutions, which have been established for improving the morals of the people, and training our youth to knowledge and virtue."*

Gentlemen, permit me to remind you, how much the success of every enterprise depends on the perseverance of those, who are engaged in it. Whatever confidence arises from the consciousness of being engaged in a good cause, we have an undeniable right to enjoy. It is the cause not merely of Christian instructors, but of philosophers,

* See Gov. Strong's last proclamation for an annual fast.

of legislators, of all honourable, and virtuous men, whatever may have been their age or country. It is a cause patronized by Deity himself, the final triumph of which is not more doubtful, than his existence and moral perfections. It becomes us, indeed, to examine the motives, by which we are actuated in every attempt to raise the standard of public morals; but all, who endeavour this, with feelings worthy of the object, will be acknowledged, to use the words of inspiration, *as fellow workers together with God*, and will share in the honours of that day, when peace in the universe shall be established; when the long conflict shall be decided between reason, order, and piety on the one side, and passion, selfishness, and moral uproar on the other.

But, in such a cause, it may be asked, why we do not witness more present success. I fear, Gentlemen, that this question is too easily answered. Our success is, perhaps, now in higher proportion to our endeavours, than these are to the object in view. When exertions to suppress intemperance shall have been made for many years, with ardour, tempered by deliberation and sound judgment, and with something of that stubborn perseverance, with which men are wont to pursue their private advantage, it will be in season, should there be occasion for it, to complain of our ill success. The fact unhappily is, that, when we first engage in any object of public utility, there is a preternatural excitement produced, which is followed by correspondent languor. And we are in danger of spending the remainder of our days in refreshing our exhausted spirits, and in complain-

ing, that nothing great or good can be effected in such a world as ours.

I am far from believing, however, that the general good, which has resulted from societies for suppressing intemperance, is inconsiderable. Many established drunkards may not, indeed, have been reclaimed to sobriety. But, that the unnecessary, and, therefore, injurious consumption of ardent spirits, among persons, who were never intemperate, has been essentially diminished, is a fact, of which we can have no doubt. The importance of this fact is seldom duly appreciated. In consequence of it, many expenses have been prevented among those, who could ill encounter them; and habits have been seasonably interrupted, which would have issued in customary inebriation. It may be a more splendid feat to recover a post, than maintain it; but surely the latter is not less conducive to a happy termination of the war.

The object of our union is to discountenance and suppress, not only the free use of ardent spirits, but likewise its kindred vices, profaneness and gaming.

There is no measure so effectual, it has been observed, for exterminating particular vices, as to strengthen moral feelings and principles. Whatever tends to subvert these principles and deaden these feelings, we are bound, therefore, uniformly and perseveringly to oppose. In the whole dark catalogue of human vices, there is none, which tends to this, with more fatal effect, than the customary use of profane language. The enormity of this crime, considered in a religious point of

view, might better be discussed on a more solemn occasion. We now speak of it only as it affects civil society and social order. Instead of detaining you, by showing, which might easily be done, how this crime tends to debase the whole moral character, by breaking that golden chain, let down from heaven to earth, to connect man with the Author of his being, I would respectfully appeal to every person present;—I appeal to those especially, who sustain the honourable relation of parents, or guardians to the rising generation. Are you willing, that your sons and your daughters should form their characters under the influence, and in imitation, of those, who avow their disregard to revelation, by speaking contemptuously of its rewards and punishments? Are you willing to contemplate them, as future members of the community, impatient of order, hostile to restraint, and to all Christian establishments,—to every thing indeed, which sober, rational, and virtuous men have deemed precious and venerable;—all, that is secure, or stable, or lovely in the social state, and all, that is august, or blissful, and holy beyond the grave?

On the contrary, if this earth can be the scene of any delightful visions, they are those presented to the mind of that parent, who, in looking forward to a period, subsequent to his own death, sees his descendants, whether in retired or prominent stations, the friends of domestic virtue, of liberty, of law, and religion; loving their families and their country, and cherishing Christianity, not only as that instrument, which conveys to good men the *heavenly inheritance*, but as forming a fundamental

part of the civil constitution, under which they live.

Permit me, Gentlemen, to close, by reminding you and myself of what we ought never to forget.

Whatever is to be done for society, for the interests of virtue, and for the honour of God, must be done speedily. This consideration is forced upon our minds, by the recent and much lamented death of that distinguished citizen,* who first presided in this society:—a citizen, whose powerful and splendid talents were exciting interest, not only in this Commonwealth, but in the centre of our confederated republic. The Lord hath taken away *the honourable man, the counsellor, and the eloquent orator.*† Let us heed the solemn warning, and look forward to the day of eternal retribution. *Behold, I come quickly*, saith the Divine Author of our religion, *my reward is with me, to give to every man, according as his works shall be.*

* Hon. Samuel Dexter, Esq.

† Isaiah iii. 3.

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

Of the Massachusetts Society for the suppression of Intemperance.

IT was contemplated, in the formation of this Society, that its operation should be chiefly as a medium, through which might be conveyed the interesting facts and plans, suggested by the numerous bodies, connected with it; together with such remarks and counsels, as might render the communication the more valuable. Immediately after the last anniversary, at the direction of the Society, was printed a large edition of the Address, delivered before them, by one of the secretaries; both in the form of a sermon and tract, accompanied by the third annual report. A sufficient number was transmitted to accommodate the members of auxiliary societies; and the residue was dispersed, gratuitously, in other channels, in and out of the Commonwealth, in a manner, it is hoped, adapted to promote the benevolent design of the Society.

From a gentleman of great respectability in the Capital of Pennsylvania, to whom a copy was forwarded, one of the counsellors received the following reply. "I have read the Tract, by the Society against intemperance, and am much pleased with it; and cordially wish them God speed. Almost all our small groceries *here*, are believed to be dram shops; but such is the state of our law, that it is almost impossible to prove it. A few years since, being foreman of a grand jury, among the many complaints for assault and battery, we found that the greater part originated in intemperance. We recommended to the court to direct their clerk to publish in the newspapers, semiannually, a list of all persons licensed to sell spirituous liquors; so that all might, when suspicious that any vender had not a license, consult such list, and readily ascertain the fact."

The Board of Counsel has to regret that the communications of the auxiliaries have not, generally, been made

in such season, as to have their influence in this report ; and, indeed, that from several very respectable branches, we have had no report, since their connexion with the Society. The Board is fully aware that great prudence is necessary, in the operations of a moral society ; and that great caution should be observed, in making them publick ; at least in connexion with names of persons and places. In the present report, therefore, and, it is confidently believed, in the future reports of the Society, such delicacy will be observed, as to render safe and expedient that free communication, which is necessary to the information of the Board, and the direction of the measures of the Society. They will avail themselves of the valuable things, they may have on file, without generally disclosing the sources, from which they have emanated.

A communication was received, last year, from Brookfield, and duly communicated to the Board ; but, by some unfortunate accident, was omitted in the printed report. This late opportunity is embraced, of announcing that an association was formed, in the south parish of that respectable town, expressly "to aid the Massachusetts Society for suppressing Intemperance ; requesting any communications, which may be thought subservient to the important end."

Too late for insertion in the last year's report, a letter was received from Winthrop, announcing a society in that town, "consisting of about fifty worthy and influential characters, pledging their sincere and strenuous co-operation with this Society, in suppressing intemperance," and soliciting communications of advice and counsel. They mention, with particular solicitude, "the many evils resulting from the free use of ardent spirits, given by military officers," and wish that some measures may be devised, to check the practice.

Soon after the annual meeting, a letter was received from the secretary of a moral society, formed in South Hampton, January, 1814, "to discountenance vice and encourage virtue, and particularly to resist, with determined energy, the vice of intemperance." At their first annual meeting, the society "voted to form a union with the Massachusetts Society for suppressing intemperance, and to be considered as an auxiliary of the same."

The annual report of the Danvers Auxiliary Society has been received, with an excellent Sermon, delivered on their anniversary, by the Rev. Benjamin Wadsworth. They are both valuable documents ; and will furnish important facts and statements, in this report.

A communication has been received by the Board from the Portland Auxiliary Society, containing facts and suggestions of great interest. Their fourth annual report, dated 27 April, 1816, was printed; and merits the serious and attentive consideration of the community. It ably exposes the evils of a not unfrequent custom of retailers, the selling of liquor to be drank in their shops; and forcibly urges selectmen, in all our towns, duly to regard the character of the persons, who apply for approbation, as retailers and taverners, and in carrying into effect the wholesome provisions of the statute, regulating licenses. It states one fact, which has been carefully investigated, and which should lead to similar inquiries, in other places. "Out of 85 persons, now supported at the work house, in this town, 71 became paupers in consequence of *intemperance*, being $\frac{7}{8}$ of the whole number. Of 118, mostly heads of families, who are supplied at their own houses, more than half are of that character.* The expense, the past year, was upwards of 6000 dollars. But for that vice, it might have been less than 2000." We cannot but hope that the persevering measures of this energetick and benevolent society will be crowned with success, and rewarded with the esteem of that respectable town.

The first report from "The Rehoboth Auxiliary Society for the suppression of intemperance and other vices," made 4 January, 1815, was not received till the last autumn. With much satisfaction are the labours and purposes of these our brethren acknowledged. All must unite, cordially, in their "devout hope, that by mild, prudent, firm, and persevering measures, they may secure the concurrence of the wise and virtuous, and the approbation and blessing of heaven."

The first report from the "New Bedford Auxiliary Society," dated 29, xii. month, 1815, has also been received with great pleasure. We could quote much, from this able paper, but must here be content with a few sentences, of a general nature, and peculiarly forcible and apposite. "It ought to be solemnly impressed upon the minds of all, that each one has a duty to perform, in promoting the objects of this society; and that an active and zealous discharge of this duty will greatly facilitate our labours, and essentially contribute to the accomplishment of our designs. In every association

* "This estimate may be understood to embrace families, reduced to poverty by this cause; so that it is not intended that the whole number of individuals, included, have been *personally* intemperate. Among the number are, also, several state paupers." *Appendix.*

“of this nature, something more than a mere nominal coalition is necessary. There must be a union in counsel and action, as well as in name and design. Each member must *set his face as a flint* against all those prevalent habits, which lead to intemperance; and strenuously endeavour, by his influence and example, by advice and authority, to discountenance and prevent every kind of vice and immorality.”

A liberal communication has been received from the Hon George Thacher, of Biddeford. It would gratify the Board and the publick, if the limits of this report were such, as to admit much of his interesting matter. They are happy to avail themselves of the opinion and example of so respectable a character, on a point, always regarded by this Society as of essential importance, in any efforts to arrest the evil, where it most prevails, in the labouring classes of society. He gives it as his “unqualified opinion, that it is neither necessary nor useful for the farmer, or the hired man, to make a *daily* use of ardent spirits, even in the smallest quantities, that the farmer obtains no more *labour*, nor the man *strength*, in consequence of the application of this irregular stimulus.” His opinion is founded on the experience of 45 years, and very particular observation on his father’s farm, and his own. On the former farm, labour was performed at the most difficult seasons of the year, on the salt meadow, by night and by day, in heat, and wet, and cold, without a drop of spirit. In the management of his own farm, for a course of years, he has expressly stipulated with his labourers to furnish them no spirit, at any season of the year, but makes them a special consideration in the wages, and furnishes them beer.

He speaks in terms of high esteem of a Quaker, who laboured for him two years. “He never drank spirits, but took into the field with him *milk, milk and water*, or *sweet butter milk*.” “I have never known the man, who was so little exhausted by working in the heat as he. He always said—when a man was dry and hot by labour, he should drink something that would nourish, as well as stimulate. He would add,—*There is no nourishment in rum*.”

In the detailed account, with which this respected civilian and philosophical farmer has favoured the Board, of his conduct to his labourers, we discover the marks of economy and of liberality, of enlightened regard to their present health and comfort, and their lasting welfare; and are not surprized that he is able to command the best labourers, without the allurements of rum.

The Board of Counsel have great satisfaction in stating that they have evidence, which leaves not a doubt upon their minds, that the mild measures of the Society have been salutary, and are felt in many parts of the Commonwealth. They believe that the publick is awaking from its slumber, in regard to this insidious vice; that the community is reflecting upon the subject; that much is heard from the pulpit, and read from the press; numerous societies are resolving and acting; and many, who decline to become members of associations, cordially approve their measures, and adopt the most important of them. In the first annual report of one of the auxiliary societies it is stated—"In regard to ardent spirits they are confident that there have been less quantities consumed, the year past, than in the year preceding; and that the measures of the society have had a sensible effect in contributing to this diminution." It is a constitutional point, with all the auxiliaries, or one of their first regulations, to introduce a reform among labourers.

In one of the reports, before alluded to, it is observed; "To abolish the custom of giving stated potations of ardent spirits to hired labourers, which has been a prolific source of intemperate habits, the members of this association have agreed not to furnish to the men, they employ a daily allowance of spirit; nor to give it, except in cases of particular necessity. We have the pleasure to state that no difficulty, to our knowledge, has arisen, on this account, in procuring faithful labourers. Some, who are not members of the society, have adopted the same rule; and there is good reason to believe, that the pernicious custom is gradually wearing away, and will eventually become entirely obsolete."

On this all important subject, the arguments are so obvious, and the measure, considered in regard to its remote consequences, is so humane, that the restriction has been already adopted, by many of our respectable merchants and farmers. Many diminish the quantity, formerly allowed; some give it but once in the day; and others, on occasions only of fatigue and special exposure; and some stipulate, to furnish spirit, on *no occasion or pretence*, and make a consideration in the contract. This practice, it is hoped, will become general; and the influence of the Society, and the auxiliaries, should be steadily directed to this important point. This measure meets the yeomanry and the mariners of our country at the head of the way, at the point where their danger commences, and leads them into habits, which are equally important to personal welfare, the peace and

comfort of families, and the publick good. In *preventing* intemperance, this measure is of the highest importance.

The attention of the Society is earnestly called to an evil of great extent, the *multiplication and abuse of licenses*. This, probably, greatly tends to foster intemperance, where the habit is begun; and directly decoys the thoughtless, the idle, and the poor. The frail are tempted at every corner of the streets; and there, most effectually, where the law is provided to secure them from temptation. Whatever else is purchased, the change is made in some intoxicating liquor. From every quarter we hear loud complaints, on this subject. "At those places," says a respectable communication, "are the polluted fountains, from which the confirmed drunkard draws his daily and almost hourly streams of poison, which convert him into a madman, a disturber of the peace, a loathsome object of disgust, a helpless burthen on society; and many promising young men, through their social and liberal feelings, are there drawn into the practice of intemperate drinking, and thereby are lost to society."

The extent of the evil is thus described; we hope as to towns in general, overcharged: "It is to be feared there are few retail shops, where the dram and the glass of grog, cannot at all times be purchased and drank; and that many taverners and retailers are in the habit of allowing, and even encouraging, the people of the neighbourhood to sit drinking in their shops and houses." Another communication complains that their Society "cannot expect to produce a very extensive reformation, while those nuisances remain open in the place,—those sinks of iniquity."

Two remarks occur to the Board, on this alarming subject. The first has regard to the cold blooded selfishness of the irregular retailer. The paltry change, in his money drawer, is *the price of blood*. It is scarcely too much to say of him, in regard to the tippler, whom he allures to his shop, and seldom sends sober away, that he is his neighbour's murderer. He leads him blindfolded to the precipice, and leaves him to plunge into the gulf of everlasting ruin. "*Wo, wo unto him, that giveth his neighbour drink, and putteth his bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also.*" Such gains are described in sacred language: "*Your riches are corrupted—your garments are moth eaten—your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and it shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped up treasures together*"

er for the last days." Let not such money be put into the treasury ; but *be given for the potter's field, to bury strangers in.*

Great as the evil is, it may be further remarked, that a reform is not impracticable. Let the measures be adopted everywhere, which have been carried into effect in some places. In several towns, "large and respectable committees" have conferred with taverners and retailers, and by friendly expostulation and advice, and, in the last resort, by disclosing a reluctant, but fixed determination to enforce the law upon offenders, have produced a sensible effect ; in one place, *an entire reform among the retailers ;* in another, *an agreement of the whole not to offend.* In one town, the selectmen declined renewing the license of any retailer, who had broken the law, and was unwilling to "engage to abandon the obnoxious practice." These mild measures accord with the views of the Board ; and they do honour to the gentlemen, who have adopted them. And few are the taverners and retailers, it is hoped, who may not be reformed by the persuasion of respectable citizens. If any love to pry on the vice and misery of individuals and families too dearly to yield their victims to *persuasion ;* it is then time to *demand them by law.* We have laws, which touch the case, and, if faithfully executed, are competent to correct the evil. We have information of the prosecution of a large number of retailers and taverners, in the past year ; and, so far as decisions have been obtained, in every case, the event has been favourable to the cause of reform.

It is earnestly hoped from selectmen, in the several towns, and from the courts of sessions, in the several counties, that they will perceive the necessity of greater caution, in order to check this serious evil in the State. Is it not incumbent upon them, as the legitimate guardians of public morals, to put down the retailers, who sell as taverners, and suck their living from the veins of the thoughtless and wretched poor ? If selectmen would refuse a recommendation to those, who have abused their licenses, the evil would be soon checked. The Court, in general, only wish to learn who the criminal individuals are, to put them out of their stewardship. To the honour of one of our Courts, upon the representation, under oath, of an individual, that a certain retailer had abused his license, they unanimously refused to renew it.

Some pains have been taken to ascertain, what proportion of the *expense of the poor list* may be set down to the score of *ardent spirits.* And we have great confi-

dence in stating, that the estimate, before given, as respects one of our seaports,* is less than the average expense of the poor in our towns, incurred through intemperance. In another printed document, communicated to the Board, of unquestionable authority, it is said,—“The great majority of those, who are thrown upon publick charity, as paupers, may justly ascribe their impoverished circumstances to intemperance. It would appear almost incredible to relate how it crowds prisons, hospitals, workhouses, and almshouses with miserable objects. Of 51 tenants in the house provided for the poor in this town, a number of whom belong to the States, I am informed that there are but six exceptions, three of them insane, and one idiot; but with pleasure I add, that since their admission, several are hopefully reformed. In another town, out of 40, but three are excepted.”

In a former report was published, not a loose conjecture, but an estimate, founded on facts and publick documents, of the immense expense of the ardent spirits, needlessly and perniciously consumed, in the country. Some are heard to say—It is an expense, which falls on the *consumers*; and that they have a right to do what they will with their own, to drink if they please, and go to perdition in their own way. But if the above statement be correct, and the facts in other towns correspond to facts, ascertained in some, there are *annually paid, in this Commonwealth alone, \$900,000 for the support of the victims of intemperance.* This it costs the sober, the laborious, and prudent, for the revels of the idle and profligate. This it costs the community to tolerate the abuse of licenses, and to countenance the destruction of the intemperate.

It is incidentally mentioned, in the last extract, that *several drunkards, confined in the poorhouse, were hopefully reformed.* This fact is evidence in favour of a point, urged in the last annual address—“*That the intemperate man should be laid under the merciful necessity of total abstinence from his banc.*” Let selectmen be persuaded, seasonably to appoint a guardian for the intemperate man. Let families be induced to complain of the abuse they suffer, from the delirious violence of an intemperate head, and procure his confinement. Let parents, broken hearted at the conduct of an intemperate son, conduct to him as to an unfortunate maniac, one who has lost his reason, and place him in solitary confinement, and patiently wait, not merely till the effects of

* See page 22.

the last debauch are gone, but till reason is restored to its vigour, the disease is expelled from the body, and the blood and humours are purified, and circulate with the briskness and glow of health. Let them do this, and they need not despair of his yet proving a son of consolation.

The Board need not remind their associates, that whatever they would do, in this connexion, and in all other labours for God and their fellow men, they should do without delay, and with all their might. We know not how soon the period of action here will close. They cannot omit to stir up their own minds, and those of their brethren, to a solemn consideration of the loud call of Providence, to them and all, in the recent sudden death of an early friend, steady supporter, and liberal benefactor to this society, and its first President, the late honourable SAMUEL DEXTER, LL. D.—On his preeminent talents and brilliant eloquence, his distinguished legal attainments and publick services, this is not the place to attempt an eulogy. *We* love to remember his uniform disposition to advance our design; his animating encouragement, that as it was good, so it was practicable. Nor can we forbear to record his decided protest against, and personal influence in discountenancing, the too fashionable waste of time in convivial indulgence, which often approaches, and not seldom ends in criminal intemperance.

The Board conclude their report with remarking that the operations of the Society have not been ineffectual; that something has been done towards obtaining the humane object of their association; and yet that much remains to be done, that much has occurred to encourage and animate them; and yet that difficulties lie before them, which demand fortitude and patience, talent and zeal to surmount. Let pity for human beings, sliding down helplessly into ruin, and compassion for a thousand wretched families; let a patriotick regard to the character and welfare of the State, and a wish to relieve our towns from the pressure of enormous poor taxes, induce the Society to persevere.

31 May, 1816.

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